

SUPPORTING SOUTHWEST VIRGINIA'S MANUFACTURING JOBS

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During the recent economic crisis, manufacturing has taken a severe hit. It is important to turn that trend around. Encouraging a strong manufacturing industry will help us create the jobs that we need to emerge from the recession, and I strongly support efforts that will create a climate supportive to manufacturing enterprises.

In recent months, Southwest Virginia manufacturers have shown promising signs of economic recovery. For example, in Galax, Vaughan-Bassett Furniture headquartered in Galax is set to become the largest wooden bedroom manufacturer in the United States. The company has undertaken a \$1 million, four phase expansion following the investment of \$3 million in new manufacturing equipment, which enables the factory to cut significantly more lumber and generate more furniture parts.

Since the installation of the new equipment, the company has added approximately 50 jobs and is expecting to continue its expansion in Galax in the future. The purchase of the new equipment was made possible by a tax benefit I helped to secure in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, which accelerated the depreciation schedule for capital assets helping businesses move forward with capital investments like equipment purchases.

Throughout my service in Congress, I have strongly supported efforts to benefit manufacturers, and I am pleased to report that the U.S. House of Representatives has recently

approved several bills that benefit manufacturing by investing in innovation, improving manufacturing infrastructure, strengthening the workforce and creating a level playing field for American companies competing globally.

Congress has approved and the President will soon sign into law the U.S. Manufacturing Enhancement Act, which makes it cheaper for American companies to obtain the materials they need to manufacture goods. Additionally, the House has passed five more job-creating bills on the agenda, which are waiting for Senate action.

- The SECTORS Act, which forms partnerships between businesses, unions, and educators to train workers for some of the most needed 21st-century jobs.
- The National Manufacturing Strategy Act, which directs the President to work with industry and state leaders to build a manufacturing-boosting strategy every four years—the same kind of strategy that countries like China, India, the U.K., Germany, Brazil, and Canada already have in place.
- The Clean Energy Technology Manufacturing and Export Assistance Act, which ensures that clean energy technology firms have the information and assistance they need to compete at home and abroad.
- And the End the Trade Deficit Commission bill, which is intended to develop policies that will combat the trade imbalance and promote the export of American goods.

In addition, the House also approved a measure that will provide additional resources for the Patent and Trademark Office to unclog its backlog of 1.2 million patent applications so that innovative ideas can move to market more quickly.

These measures have won bipartisan support and will help us reach the goal of doubling U.S. exports over the next five years—a plan that has already seen some success, with exports of U.S. goods up \$22.4 billion from last year. I look forward to working with my colleagues to approve additional measures that will benefit manufacturing.

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